

Health and Physical Education Teachers : Why are you important?



A quality health and physical education (HPE) program will enable students to:

- Develop the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to make decisions and take action that leads to a healthy and physically active lifestyle for themselves and the community in which they live.

It takes a quality health and physical education professional to provide:

- A developmentally appropriate and meaningful program that enhances the physical, cognitive, and affective development of all students
- Inclusive instruction that maximises engagement by all students in class activities
- Ongoing assessment and feedback to all students that is used to guide student learning
- A program that supports lifelong learning toward leading a healthy and physically active life

How much time does your school allocate to HPE?

If your physical education program does not meet the recommended time mandate, or is under threat from the crowded curriculum remind your peers that:

- Evidence suggests that time in physical education and physical activity* may actually improve academic learning. Research conducted has found no negative effect on academic performance when physical education and physical activity time has been increased during the school day.
- A major barrier to increasing physical education time in schools is the perception that time spent in activities such as physical education, physical activity and recess will undermine academic learning but nothing could be further from the truth.

**Physical education and physical activity ARE NOT the same but there is evidence that when classroom teachers use activity breaks this can result in an improvement in cognitive function and classroom behaviour.*

ACHPER (SA) Minimum Time Recommendations for Physical and Sport Education

ACHPER (SA) recommends:

- A strengths-based approach to H&PE curriculum that acknowledges that most students come to the learning area feeling positive about their health and their participation in physical activity (ACARA, 2012)
- That all schools have access to qualified H&PE specialist teachers.
- That consistent with the Melbourne Declaration (2008) H&PE be positioned as an essential component of the curriculum for students within the compulsory ages of schooling (R-10); with physical education occurring weekly (ACARA, 2012).
- The reintroduction of “daily physical education” for all early years and primary school settings because of the vital role played by physical activity in healthy brain and body development (Ratey, 2008).
- The reaffirmation of the importance of “active schools” (Fox, 1996; Pill, 2006) where schools become sites that act to enhance daily physical activity accumulation.
- That eighty hours H&PE in curriculum time per year (ACARA, 2012) is the minimum time entitlement for H&PE for students within the compulsory age of schooling, and that 100 minutes per week is the minimum expectation for physical education (Government of South Australia, 1996)

Questions to ask about your school

1. Has our school developed an up to date written Health and Physical Education policy?
2. Do we currently meet or surpass the minimum time mandates for Sport & Physical Education?
3. Do we have a planned and sequential program that addresses key content descriptors and elaborations of AusVELS?
4. Does our HPE program provide learning experiences that are inclusive of all students and are safe, enjoyable and promote an active and healthy lifestyle?
5. Does our HPE program include ongoing, authentic assessment as an integrated part of learning?

If you answered No or Maybe to any of these questions and would like support in further developing your program, please contact the Professional Learning Team at ACHPER (SA) Branch.

About Us

ACHPER (SA) is a not for profit incorporated organisation founded in 1978 that provides programs, services and information for the education sites and their communities focused on active and healthy living. ACHPER (SA) provides advocacy and leadership through innovative, quality professional services and programs.



For more information and further support, please contact:

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